



Supervisor

Caleb A. Kershner

Catoctin District



Loudoun County
VIRGINIA

Budget Wrap-Up Session on Monday

Dear Catoctin residents,

The Board of Supervisors will hold its [final budget work session](#) for the county's FY 2023 budget **this Monday, March 21**, starting at **6:00 PM**. I've worked hard to cut unnecessary spending items from the proposed budget, and to fend off additional spending proposals that the county can do without. Unfortunately, we are still facing a tax rate that's well above the equalized rate. Unless we can persuade enough supervisors to make more cuts on Monday, your real property taxes will go up this year.

I also wanted to mention a local opportunity from [The New Ag School](#), a group that teaches young adults about farming and agriculture. They are now accepting registrations for their [Think Outside program](#), an 8-week course that will connect students with the training and mentorship they need to explore a future in this field (no pun intended). I've included details on that below.

Your Tax Dollar at Work FY 2023 Proposed Budget

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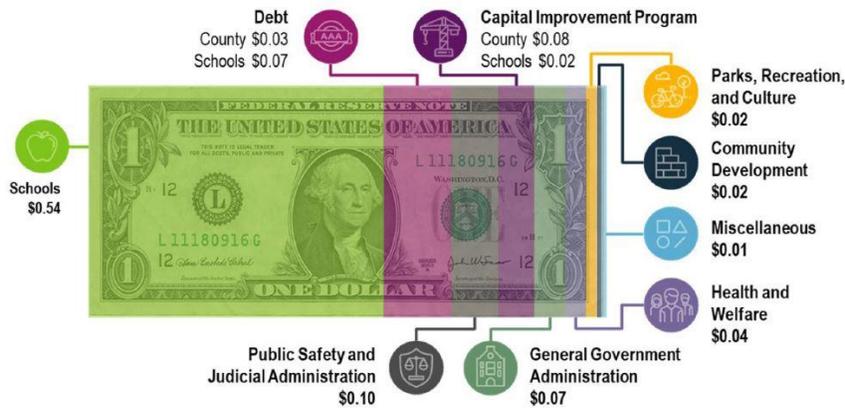


Image Credit: ["FY 2023 Proposed Budget: Where the Money Goes"](#) / Loudoun County Government

Where the FY 2023 Budget Stands

As I mentioned above, the county's budget is currently set to increase our homeowners' tax burden. I've made and supported motions to cut spending throughout our budget work sessions. So far we've managed to cut at least \$8.1 million from the original proposal, and have blocked several attempts to tack on extra spending.

Unfortunately, with a budget as large as Loudoun's, those cuts amount to just a half-cent reduction in the tax rate, from \$0.895 to \$0.890. I will keep pushing us to get our tax rate down to the equalized rate of \$0.845, which would keep the average homeowner's tax bill the same as it was last year.

That brings us to LCPS's funding request, which is the big item on our agenda for Monday's budget meeting. This year, the School Board is asking us for \$75 million more than we gave them last time. I am firmly opposed to their request.

I don't object to giving our public schools the funding they need. But Loudoun County already gives LCPS over \$1.5 billion dollars every year. That represents about 63% of our local tax funding. We pay nearly two thirds of our county's tax revenues straight to the public schools, and run our county government and services on what's left over.

It is clear by now that our school system needs to change its approach to budgeting and spending. As the Board of Supervisors, we need to give them the financial support - and accountability - that will help them get their house back in order. We can't just keep giving them tens of millions more in funding each year. It's not good for them, and it's downright harmful for our taxpayers.

By setting a healthy limit on our contribution to LCPS, the Board can help our school system get its spending back under control. With a healthier fiscal approach, LCPS would likely find that \$1.5 billion was sufficient to cover its necessary costs, including decent salaries for its teachers. (They might even discover that they could do all that for rather less than \$1.5 billion. Again, I must point out that we run the entire county government on about half that much money.)

As I promised at the start of this budget season, I'm going to keep advocating for a county budget that sticks to the equalized tax rate and prevents people's tax burdens from growing. That is still my plan. I may get outvoted, but I will keep pushing for this until the last vote goes through.



Image Credit: "[Tractor Mower Pasture](#)" by [analogicus](#) / [Pixabay](#)

The New Ag School's Think Outside Program

[The New Ag School](#) is a Loudoun-based organization that works to give young adults a practical introduction to our agricultural industry. As part of that effort, they are now signing students up for their [Think Outside program](#). Starting on March 26, the students will meet every Saturday for eight weeks. During the program sessions, they will be introduced to mentors from the industry, and will be taught hands-on skills that will help them in their future careers.

Tuition: \$295 per participant

Content: The New Ag School says participants will get hands-on training from experienced mentors, cultivate a work ethic and transferable skills, and get connected to part-time, summer, and other job opportunities upon completing the program and earning their certificate.

If you'd like to learn more about the program or sign up, you can do that at [the Think Outside program webpage](#).

Learn More

Sincerely,

Supervisor Caleb A. Kershner

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